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FRANZ SCHUBERT: A STUDY.

By FR. NIECKS.

(Continued from page 73.)

THE CHAMBER MUSIC FOR ORCHESTRAL INSTRUMENTS.

THERE remain yet for discussion two other works belonging to this class of chamber music, the string quintett (Op. 163) and the octett (Op. 166). In motives and style the latter reminds one strongly of Mozart and Beethoven. It would be exaggeration to say that Schubert rarely comes to the surface, but it cannot be denied that often he is hardly visible, and sometimes even wholly lost sight of. Still, the octett is a charming composition, and worth having. The work consists of six movements: an allegro, with an introductory adagio; an andante un poco mosso; a scherzo; a tema con variazioni; a menuetto; and the finale, an allegro with a short introduction. The weakest of them is the menuetto; the andante the finest. A short quotation from the latter will give some idea of the softness and roundness of its contours, and of the loveliness and loveliness of its character. (The following illustrations are scored, so as to take up as little room as possible; Nos. 2 and 6, however, are simply piano arrangements.)

No. 1.

Andante un poco moto.

Clarinet.
pp Violin 1.
Viola. pp
'Cello & Bass. pp

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In the first movement the reminiscence of the opening bars of the introduction before the repetition of the first section may be noted as an effective incident. The fourth movement attracts one's attention next. Out of the pretty trifling theme—

No. 2.

Andante.

Strings.
p

the composer, like a conjuror who, from some small receptacle, draws flower after flower without end, evolves variation after variation with ever-new combinations and adornments, delightful and graceful throughout, pleasing to ear and fancy. The happy employment of each individual instrument—two violins, viola, violoncello, double-bass, clarinet, horn, and bassoon—cannot escape the attention of the musician. The jovial scherzo and sprightly finale, indeed, all the movements, with the exception of the menuetto, have a freshness, naturalness, and completeness which win our good-will at once.

The octett is of the year 1824; up to that time Schubert's individuality is not so distinctly pronounced, and at the same time so artistically presented in his larger instrumental works as in his songs and shorter instrumental pieces. The quintett, which was composed in 1828, shows us Schubert, free from the authoritative influence of his great predecessors and older contemporary. Although not blind to the many virtues of the work, I cannot help thinking that it is sometimes over-valued. Equality is not one of its virtues; its merit lies rather in its being a rich mine of beautiful details than in its general excellence. As to the character of its subject-matter: it has more affinity with the G major than with the A and D minor quartetts; it contains more listless dreaming than active thought; more undefined feeling than deep passion; more sensuous dress than spiritual substance. This refers especially to the first two movements and the last. Musicians will study the score with advantage, and often wonder at the good account to which our composer puts the five instruments, and particularly at the excellent use he makes of the two violoncellos. What a sensuous charm there is, for instance, in the second theme of the first movement—the atmosphere of a warm summer night surrounds us—

No. 3.

Violins 1 and 2.

pp Violoncello 1 and 2.
Viola. pp pizz.

The two melodious parts are first assigned to the two violoncellos, whilst the other instruments play a light accompaniment; afterwards the two violins exchange parts with them. Next note the continuation of this theme, how the viola follows the first violin in canonic imitation, and how each of the other instruments has its own characteristic part.

No. 4.]

Violin 1. *p*

Violin 2. *pp*

Violoncello 1. *pp*

Violoncello 2. *pp*

Staccato sempre.

deces.

deces.

But there are also dark spots in the bright picture, for a little farther on we come on one of the commonest and most hackneyed phrases. The second part, too, does not always afford unmixed delight; I am thinking of the working-out section, which seems a little too much worked out. The adagio brings sweetness more than enough; it surfeits.

No. 5.

Violin 1. *Adagio, pp*

Violin 2. *pp*

Viola. *pp*

Violoncello. *pp*

Violoncello 2. *pp*

Espressivo.

After this movement, with its sultry atmosphere, the magnificent scherzo has the effect of a shower of rain. How pleasant the natural healthy tone which pervades it how refreshing the free vibrations of the C, G, and D strings so lustily set agoing by the second violin, viola, and violoncellos, after the general oppressiveness and instrumental refinement of the adagio!

No. 6.

f

acc.

The trio, an *andante sostenuto* in $\frac{3}{4}$ with its sombre colouring, contrasts effectively with the other parts of the scherzo.

No. 7.

mf

f

tutti, p

In the last movement we feel again that no one understands so well as Schubert how to disarm criticism, to smooth the knit brow of the grave, to conjure up a smile on the lips which were going to mutter something about childishness and thoughtless trifling. Yes, he is often a child; but a child full of grace and light-heartedness. This observation has reference to the second subject and its playful motions. The first is more manly, but although very characteristic, it now and then almost loses itself in trivialities.

THE ORCHESTRAL WORKS.

"Death has here entombed a rich treasure,
But still more glorious hopes."

The above lines from the poet Grillparzer's epitaph on Schubert have been represented as an injustice to the departed composer, but I think without reason. If we pass in review Schubert's various instrumental works we find that in the main there is discernible a continual advance, a gradual disengaging from the fetters of authority and custom, an unfolding of original thought, and of the power of adequately representing it—the individuality of the former more and more permeating the latter—and an expansion and increasing brilliance of his imaginative faculty, till at last the climax of his life's work is reached, death bidding him halt in his onward course. In this sense we must understand Schumann's words, "He who does not know this symphony (the great C major) knows as yet little of Schubert." Or in other words, Schubert tells us in his last symphonic work much he had not yet told us, nor any one else either; much also, though we may have heard it from him before, was never so well expressed. To this symphony, then, I wish to draw the reader's attention for a little. Schubert completed it in March, 1828, the year of his death, and gave it to the *Musikverein*, hoping to have it performed by that Society. But it was found too long and too difficult,

and on that account laid aside. Had it not been for Schumann, who knows how long it might have remained unnoticed, nay, who knows whether it would ever have seen the light, and not have perished before a clear-sighted, enthusiastic, and at the same time influential musician discovered and took charge of it? Schumann's article in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*—reprinted in his collected writings—on Schubert's C major symphony may be recommended not only as one of the best and most suggestive notices (a criticism it can hardly be called) written on this remarkable work, but also as furnishing the most trustworthy information about the discovery and disinterment (in 1838), and the first public performance of it at the *Gewandhaus* concert, on March 22, 1839, under the direction of Mendelssohn. Be comforted, ye composers with unperformed manuscripts, there is hope for you; Franz Schubert's C major symphony, his greatest creation, was performed for the first time, eleven years after its completion. The contemplation of the fact that it was also nearly as many years after his death is less encouraging to those who work for something besides immortality. To turn to the contents of the symphony: it is not an outpouring of a tale of sorrow or joy as actually existing at the time when Schubert composed the work, but mirrorings of his imagination, glorified reminiscences of bygone days, forecasts of future possibilities. Let us see what some of the best critics thought of the work. Schumann, after giving a glowing description of Vienna, with its beautiful women, public shows, and St. Stephen's steeple—picturing the city spread out in a fertile plain, which gradually rises to higher and higher mountains, and girded around as with innumerable ribbons by the Danube, which, seen from the heights above, seems everywhere to disappear in copse and forest, Roman Catholicism casting a light exhalation of incense over the whole scene—tells us that with the bright romantic life of the symphony the town rose before him more distinctly than at any other time; and that it became quite clear to him, how just among such surroundings a work like this could be born. He also speaks of the *novelistic* character of the symphony, comparing it to a thick romance in four volumes by Jean Paul, and says that there lies hidden in it more than mere beautiful melody, more than mere sorrow and joy, such as music had already expressed in a hundred ways, that it leads us into regions where we do not remember having been before, that where a horn is heard calling from afar, the sound seems to him to come from another sphere. Now let us hear Reissmann. "The melody of the horns in the introductory andante which opens the symphony, rouses like the call of Oberon's horn. . . . The extremely varied colouring of the whole of the song-like passage, represented by the full orchestra, shows clearly that the world to which this work transports us is the dream-world, fantastically adorned, and lit up with magic splendour. . . . The most varied life unfolds itself with transporting rapidity; and we only regret that we cannot distinguish the individual forms in the motley succession of figures and groups, nor follow their doings and endeavours. We see indeed armed spirits of the night, marching in solemn procession, but we should like to learn whether they are teasing hobgoblins or friendly elves, whether they march out to bless or to play pranks. . . . The master leaves us in doubt on this matter. In his zeal for a life-like and natural representation of his radiant, sparkling world, he forgets to tell us about the events which happen within it; consequently we enter into the thing only with our imagination, not with our heart." And now let me recall to your mind the remark of a third critic, Ambros, which was quoted in an earlier portion of this study:—"His (Schubert's) great

symphony is a picture of Hungarian life (ein Stück Ungarn), where now noble Magyar heroes, brandishing their sabres, ride past, now Zigeuner pursue their mysterious nocturnal occupations."

Before advertent to the questions to which the reading and a comparison of these criticisms give rise, I wish to say a few words with regard to the last of them. Ambros overrated the Hungarian element of this symphony, or rather he seems to do so. For we must remember that his object in making this remark was not to analyse and characterise the work, but to point out the influence of Hungarian music on Schubert. His, therefore, is a different standpoint from ours: he looks for one of the elements which make up the total of our composer's means; we try to get a full view of the total, with all its elements. Hungary, which occupies so large a place in Schubert's life, certainly was not absent in a work where the composer's fantasy roamed over such wide territories; still, we must not forget that the Hungarianisms which we so often meet with in Schubert and other composers (I am speaking of men of genius) are like the peculiarities of phrase which the traveller in foreign countries and the student of foreign languages make use of to give more brilliance and force to their style, or to bring out a shade of meaning unknown to their own language. The peculiarities of national music are comparable to the idioms of languages: both are highly significant.

Depreciators of music will, no doubt, point, as they always do, with great satisfaction—may be, with a triumphant sneer—to the various interpretations of Schubert's work by three such critics as I have quoted. Now it is my opinion that, in almost all cases where unprejudiced connoisseurs differ, it is with regard to the outward circumstances, not to the inward facts, which indeed are the peculiar domain of music. Music cannot inform us whether the individual of whose love, hate, rage, despair, hope, or musing, it tells us bears the name of Romeo, Iago, Lear, or Desdemona; whether the individual in question is the son of Montague, or the wife of Othello; whether an ancient in the army of Venice, or a king of Britain; whether tall or little, dark or fair; nor whether the events which caused these emotions happened in this or that place, on this or that day. But although music is wholly silent, or ambiguous, or at most faintly suggestive as to these and such-like outward circumstances, it will always be found truest and most distinct as to inward facts, *i.e.*, emotional states. A painting or statue will give you the best idea of a man's figure; a poem or other verbal description, of a man's reasoning—which as we well know is often, especially when the passions come into play, but a web of sophisms, not heartily believed in even by ourselves; genuine music shows us the feeling man—man stripped of all the vestures of cloth, flesh, and false reasoning in which he is wrapt and wraps himself. Again, critics, though differing with respect to these inward facts, may yet not contradict each other, as their differences may be merely quantitative. One comprehends more than another; one sees this side, another that: in short, they supplement each other. The same takes place in all arts, but especially in music. And why? Because it is the most subjective art, and because the greater the subjectivity of an art, or work of art, the greater the objectivity of judgment required to judge of it justly and to comprehend it fully. Need I say that objectivity of judgment is an ideal after which we strive, but which we can never completely realise? To sum up the whole matter, in so far as our physical and psychical constitution is conformable to that of the composer, we shall be impressed by his music in the same way—supposing him to be a master of his art—as he was impressed by the actual occurrences or

imagined facts which suggested the music. But the same effect does not necessarily presuppose the same cause or causes. Different objects and occurrences may produce similar emotions and states of feeling. And apart from this new difficulty, we can recognise with certainty the cause connected with an emotion excited in us by a work of the musical art, only when we have experienced in life the exact counterpart of it. But as emotions are naturally so infinitely various, we are but rarely in a position to do this: thus the only course open to us is to form an approximate estimate, by comparing the novel and unknown with the known.

Here then is a wide field for subjectivity to roam in, full of treacherous pitfalls for people who are fond of jumping at conclusions. The principle which underlies all true musical aesthetics—the main point to be considered, if we wish to understand and judge rightly—seems to me to be this: While the spoken (word) language addresses itself through the senses to the understanding and imagination, and only in the last instance to the feelings, music is conveyed by the senses directly to the feelings, and they furnish the material for the reasoning and imaginative faculties to work upon. There is, however, a multiplicity of actions and reactions going on between the feelings and the intellect which I can here merely allude to, as the discussion would lead us too far.

Now, what follows from this? First, that we make a mistake if we demand of the musical art to portray outward circumstances or things; secondly, that instead of laying any weight upon such circumstances mentioned in criticism, we ought to try to find out what emotional state they are intended to interpret. If you look on the three criticisms by Schumann, Reissman, and Ambros in this light, the discrepancies will vanish.

Before proceeding to an examination of the C major symphony, and the other orchestral works of Schubert, it may not be out of place to say a few words on a matter which is always sure to be one of the first things observed and spoken of in connection with those works—namely, instrumentation, or, as it is also called, instrumental colouring. The metaphor is significant, but it has become so common that, I am afraid, people have lost, or begin to lose, the full perception of its meaning, as is, indeed, often the case with the most beautiful figures of speech, which owe their existence to acute insight or poetic conception, and in course of time become a mere *status vocis*, without a corresponding idea in the mind. To get a thorough understanding of the matter, we must proceed analytically, and, instead of contenting ourselves with generalities concerning the whole—that is, the orchestra, or any other combination of instruments—confine ourselves first to one component part. We must all have noticed, when listening to a good performer on any instrument, how he modified the tone of it according to the sense of what he was playing, making it sound now soft, now harsh, now full, now shrill, and so on, so that we almost thought we heard different instruments. Now this performer does nothing else than imitate the human voice—the musical instrument *par excellence*, which is capable not only of inflection or change of pitch, but also of change of *timbre* (quality of tone, sound-colour); the former being, in the pictorial art, represented by lines and form, the latter by colour. In common conversation, where our mouths utter sounds and phrases in which our hearts, and often our heads too, have no part, we take little advantage of this property of the voice; but when an eloquent orator persuades or rouses an audience; when a good actor makes the joy and suffering of a struggling soul his own, and whenever, in our intercourse with our fellow-creatures, we

see affection and passion overleap the barriers of conventionality and well-bred indifference—then will reveal itself to us, and then we may admire and study, the richness of colour and tint in the human voice. This capacity is not, to the same extent, possessed by any other musical instrument. The human voice is, therefore, the noblest of all musical instruments. The following simple, but very instructive, experiment will demonstrate the truth of what has been said:—Compare the sound-colour of the interjections, ah, eh, oh, ay, and other remains of the natural language which must have preceded our conventional languages; note further the various modifications (tints) of these interjections and their corresponding meanings, understood by all men. To increase the impressiveness of conventional language, similar means are employed. Hence what we call musical language. "All passionate language does of itself become musical," says Carlyle. But, besides this as it were involuntary expression of what passes in the inner world, man describes voluntarily what passes in the outer world; and not only does he imitate sounds, but he tries also to represent visible things by conveying, through the auditory sense, impressions similar to those which he receives through the optic sense. For, although sounds and colours enter at different gates, they address themselves to the same conscious and feeling being: we may be unable to discern any likeness in the causes, but we cannot deny the affinity of the effects. Music is a development of all these elements, which in language exist in an embryonic state. The functions of instrumentation are twofold—human and decorative. The former assists in the painting of the inner world of man, with its affections and passions, by the imitation of the various *timbre* and *nuances* of the human voice and the combination and alternation of different voices; the latter interprets the outer world, the multitudinous colours of earth, sea, and sky with the play of the appearing and disappearing light, and is also of great service to the composer in the representation of animal voices and other sounds in nature, such as thunder, the rustling of leaves, the murmuring of fountains, &c., which enliven the landscapes and scenes, and often give a local habitation to a nameless tale of woe or bliss.

The expression, "instrumental colouring," suggests the following somewhat fanciful comparison with the sister-art:—An unaccompanied melody is like a simple outline; a combination of concomitant melodies executed on one instrument, like a careful line-drawing or line-engraving; a melody with an harmonic accompaniment like an outline with the shadows rubbed in with the stump; and a composition for various instruments like a painting; this class being again divisible into various sections. Of greater practical value is the consideration of Ruskin's division of the pictorial art into great schools, which furnishes the musician with rich material for reflection. "Line and light (Greek clay); line and colour (Gothic glass); mass and light (represented by Lionardo and his schools); mass, light, and colour (represented by Titian and his schools)." Such broad mapping-out of vast territories, though not always accurate as to details, is, on account of its impressiveness and suggestiveness, of immeasurable help to the art-student. Let the reader try to devise a similar scheme for the musical instrumental art, and he may be assured that, whether he be successful in his attempt or not, he will be richly repaid for any trouble he may have by an increase both of insight and comprehension. This hint must suffice; our present business calls us elsewhere.

(To be continued.)

CHOPIN: HIS LIFE AND WORKS.

By DR. JULIUS SCHUCHT.

Translated from the German, with the Author's permission, by A. H. W. and E. B. C.

(Continued from page 75.)

IN London Chopin met with a most cordial reception; his works had found there a most intelligent audience; they had been played by the first pianists, and had been highly commended by the press. There had also appeared a very interesting pamphlet, under the title of "An Essay on the Works of Frederick Chopin," which was full of characteristic and instructive passages. From the appearance, at a time when Chopin was comparatively unknown, of such an impartial and competent criticism, we may infer that the author was a man of much intelligence and culture. The path of admiration and honour thus lay open to Chopin, and there was rivalry in some of the first salons of the metropolis for the distinction of receiving him. Throughout his sojourn he played but twice in public; he performed more frequently at private parties; and on one of those occasions he was presented to the Queen. A journey to Edinburgh and the restlessness of life in a constant whirl of society naturally brought on a renewal of his illness, and the doctors advised an immediate return to France. But the homage accorded to him in London was such balm to his wounded heart that he unfortunately postponed his departure, till the critical state of his lungs, which had been irritated by the foggy atmosphere, warned him of the danger of further delay. His last appearance before departure from England was at a farewell concert given in aid of his loved compatriots, the Polish refugees. He had hardly arrived in Paris when a new misfortune befell him. His physician, Dr. Molin, who had saved his life in 1847, and in whom his confidence was unbounded, died suddenly, the victim of indefatigable zeal in his profession. This sad event was Chopin's death-blow; he had no faith in any other doctor, and now became a prey to despairing melancholy. In the winter of 1848 he was unable to work consecutively for any length of time, and could do no more than make mere sketches of future compositions. At this period he began to develop his idea of a pianoforte school, but, like many other works, it remained unfinished, and was with them committed to the flames, that nothing incomplete might survive him. Soon he became unable to leave his bed; his power of speech forsook him, and only in whispers could he communicate with his friends. His sister hastened to him from Warsaw, and shared with his friend Gutmann the task of nursing him. With that strange characteristic of his malady—extreme hopefulness in the most hopeless stages—Chopin began to make plans for the future. He rented another house, and evinced the liveliest interest in the details of its arrangement and furniture. It was a singular coincidence that on the very day of his death, while his resting-place in the cold earth was being prepared, the furniture was moved into his new abode. Neither spring nor summer brought relief from frequent and excruciating attacks; day by day he grew weaker, and thus wore on until the autumn—the time when Nature wraps herself in a robe of mourning and spreads a pall over the earth. It was in this season of fading and decay that the angel of death appeared to Chopin, to lead him to that unknown land from which no traveller returns.

"On Sunday the 15th of October," writes Liszt, "Chopin was seized with several paroxysms of severer pains and

longer duration than any he had previously borne; he endured them, however, with the utmost patience and fortitude. The Countess Delphine Potocka was by him in deep emotion; and while Chopin beheld her standing at the foot of his bed, dressed in white, and with a countenance of more angelic mien than was ever conceived by artist's enthusiasm, she must have seemed to his imagination to be an apparition from heaven. During a brief respite from extreme suffering, he begged her to sing; such a request made us think that his mind was wandering, but it was impossible to resist a repetition of his entreaty. The pianoforte was therefore moved from the *salon* to the door of his bedroom, and the countess sang amid tears and sobs. Never before had such exquisite pathos been heard in her fine voice, and while Chopin listened to it he seemed to suffer less acutely. As she concluded Stradella's well-known *Aria to the Virgin* (which tradition says was the means of saving the composer's life), Chopin whispered, 'How beautiful! my God, how beautiful! Again, yet once again, I pray you.' Though completely unnerved, the countess retained sufficient composure to comply with this last request of her dying friend and fellow-countryman; seating herself at the pianoforte she sang a psalm by Marcello. But a return of his paroxysms alarmed all present, and with his sister they threw themselves on their knees by the bedside, in tears and in prayer. None dared speak; all was still but the voice of the countess sounding like a celestial melody with a weird accompaniment of sobs and sighs. On the Monday Chopin rallied, and expressed a wish for extreme unction, but during the day his sufferings returned with increased intensity, and throughout that night he spoke not, and scarcely seemed to recognise those who stood around his bed. But about eleven o'clock he obtained relief, and then a kind of lethargy supervened, which lasted till the next day, the 17th of October. On that day about two o'clock the final struggle began, and a cold sweat flowed from his brow. After a short sleep he asked in a scarcely audible voice, 'Who is with me?' He then bent his head to kiss Gutmann's hand, and while giving this token of affection and gratitude he breathed his last. Loving he died, even as his whole life had been one of love."

In death his face, surrounded by flowers, showed again its old freshness, purity, and peace; his youthful beauty which pain and suffering had so long clouded reappeared with all its charms. The sculptor Clesinger took a cast of his features, which he afterwards modelled and executed in marble for Chopin's monument. The funeral took place on the 30th of October, at the Church of the Madelaine, when, by Chopin's express desire, Mozart's *Requiem* was performed. Liszt thus describes the service:—"The greatest artists in Paris vied with one another in their desire to take part in it. In the prelude Chopin's *Funeral March* was introduced, instrumented for the occasion by Reber. In the offertory Lefebure-Wély played his Preludes in B and E minor on the organ. The solo parts were taken by Mesdames Viardot and Castellani; Lablache sang the 'Tuba mirum,' which he had similarly sung at Beethoven's funeral. Meyerbeer and Prince Adam Czartoryski were the chief mourners. The pall-bearers were Prince Alex. Czartoryski and MM. Delacroix, Franchomme, and Gutmann."

Such were the honours paid at his death to the great artist and noble-minded man. The grave closed over his ashes, but his works are the undying possession of mankind.

(To be continued.)

THE WAGNER FESTIVAL.

THIS great festival—as unprecedented an event, for England, as that of Bayreuth was for Germany—is now among the events of the past, and, from a musical point of view, at least, we have to record a brilliant success, despite the many difficulties against which the spirited directors—Messrs. Hodge and Essex—had to contend. Six concerts were given at the Royal Albert Hall, on May 7th, 9th, 12th, 14th, 16th, and 19th. The vocalists, mostly from the Bayreuth Festival, were Frau Materna and Frau von Sadler-Grün, Frä. Waibel, Frä. Exter, and the Herren Unger, Hill, Chandon, and Schlosser. The large band of 169 performers was led by Herr Wilhelmj, of Bayreuth fame. Programme-books of the six concerts were issued, giving the German texts with English versions by Messrs. J. P. Jackson and A. Forman. Owing, however, to the severe cold and hoarseness of Herren Unger and Hill, they were unfortunately materially disarranged. Apart from its aspect as a pecuniary speculation, the principal object of the festival was to bring before the English musical public some long and important extracts from the *Ring des Nibelungen*. To present this music in a mutilated form, and without the aid of the stage and scenic effects, was of course a bold undertaking, and not in accordance with Wagner's art-theories; however, it is a consolation to know that thousands of people have heard and enjoyed music which, but for this festival, they might never have heard; and it is also pleasing to know that the music alone, without stage effects, made a deep impression on the vast audiences who heard it for the first time, and even satisfied some of the more critical who had the good fortune to attend the Bayreuth festivities of last year. Let us hope that the musical interest created both here and there may tend to hasten the day for a rendering in this country of Wagner's later works, in a complete form and on the stage.

The programmes, as at first drawn up by Wagner himself, furnished a *resumé* of the master's artistic career and development, from his first important opera, *Rienzi*, down to his latest work, *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. The first concert, Monday evening, May 7th, opened with the Kaisermarsch, and was followed by a selection from *Rienzi* (1838—41), consisting of Rienzi's prayer from the fifth act, and the address to the conspirators from the fourth act, finely declaimed by G. Unger, and the March of Peace. Then followed an interesting selection from *Tannhäuser* (1844), consisting of the prelude and first three scenes from the second act, and concluding with the march. But the great event of the evening was the selection from *Das Rheingold*, the introductory portion of the *Ring des Nibelungen*. The prelude descriptive of the flowing waters of the Rhine was magnificently played, and was followed by the scene between Alberich (C. Hill) and the three Rhine daughters (Frau von Grün, and Fräuleins Waibel and Exter). The performance of the charming programme music descriptive of Alberich's unsuccessful love-making, his awakened greed for the Rhine gold, and the consequent renunciation of love, was excellent, and seemed thoroughly to please the audience. Two extracts were given from the second scene, the majestic Walhalla theme and Loge's tidings, well sung by Max Schlosser, and the closing scene between Wotan, Fricka, &c. &c., in which Wotan and the gods enter the Walhalla built for them by the giants over a rainbow-bridge constructed by Donner.

The second concert, Wednesday, May 9th, opened with a selection from the *Flying Dutchman* (1841), consisting of the overture, the whole of the first act, and a portion of the second act. The Senta music was

charmingly sung by Frau Grün; and Herren Chandon, Hill, and Schlosser acquitted themselves creditably in the various rôles of Daland, the Dutchman, and the Steersman. A chorus of male voices (which, though small, battled bravely against the huge orchestra) was employed for the sailors' chorus; it is to be regretted that this was the only appearance of a chorus during the whole festival. The great event of the evening was, of course, the performance of the first act of the *Walküre*, one of the most graceful and fascinating portions of the whole drama. The rôles of Sieglinde, Siegmund, and Hunding were most admirably rendered by Frau Materna, and Herren Unger and Chandon; the orchestra also greatly distinguished itself under the direction of Herr Richter, who conducted the whole of this act *from memory*.

The third concert took place on Saturday morning, May 12th, and opened with a selection from *Tannhäuser*. The "Venusberg" scene, written for Paris, had been promised, "for the first time in England," but to the disappointment of many was omitted. The overture was played with great spirit under the direction of the composer. The other principal features were Wolf-ram's two songs, the first in the second act, and the address to the evening star from the third act, magnificently sung by Herr Hill, and the great duet between Elisabeth and Tannhäuser (Frau Materna and Herr Unger), sung with great spirit and dramatic expression. The selection ended with the march, at the close of which the organ made itself unduly prominent.

In the second part of the concert, another grand selection from the *Walküre* was given, comprising the orchestral arrangement of the "Walkürenritt," magnificently played, and vociferously encored; the scene between Siegmund and Brünnhilde (Frau Materna and Herr Unger) from the second act, in which Brünnhilde at first announces to Siegmund his death in the approaching combat with Hunding, but at last promises to brave Wotan's sentence, and render him victorious. Then followed the final scene of the work, the dialogue between Brünnhilde and Wotan (Herr Hill), concluding with the celebrated fire-music. The singing of all three artists was truly grand, and this, combined with the fine playing of the band under the direction of Herr Richter, made us forget for the moment that we were in the Albert Hall, and not at Bayreuth; the closing portion, however, is greatly enhanced when seen on the stage. A marked feature of this concert was the rapt stillness of the audience, who remained seated till the very close, whereas at the previous concerts many persons left during the performance.

The fourth concert, May 14th, opened with the Huldigungsmarsch, written in homage of the present King of Bavaria, and performed on his accession to the throne, in 1864. This and the following selection from *Lohengrin* (1850) were given under the direction of Herr Wagner.

The first long scene from the second act, between Ortrud and Frederick (Frau Materna and Herr Hill), was given without cuts; the second scene between Elsa (Frau Grün), Ortrud, and Frederick. Then came the great scene from the third act between Elsa and Lohengrin (Frau Grün and Herr Unger), which came, however, to an untimely end, owing to the hoarseness of Herr Unger. The beautiful orchestral prelude to the opera was then given, with great effect, by the band. In consequence of Herr Unger's misfortune, all the Siegfried music, including the celebrated bird scene, had to be omitted; but after the "Walkürenritt," had, by way of compensation, been played, Herr Unger had the courage to come forward and sing, with Frau Materna, the opening scene from the prelude to *Götterdämmerung*.

The fifth concert, May 16th, opened inauspiciously. Both G. Unger and C. Hill were unable to appear. Mr. Bernard Lane kindly undertook, at a very short notice, to sing in the quintett from the *Meistersinger* (1868). The overture and the charming introduction to the third act were finely played by the band, under the direction of the composer. The vocal selection from this opera was very fragmentary, and certainly not effective. The great event of the concert was, however, the second part, for which had been announced the whole of the third act—i.e., the concluding portion of the *Götterdämmerung*—the scene between Siegfried and the Rhine daughters; Siegfried's last song, the narration of his life, his death, and the celebrated Funeral March, and the great Brünnhilde finale. That it was not given in complete form is, of course, deeply to be regretted, but the magnificent performance of the historic and wonderfully dramatic Funeral March, together with the Brünnhilde finale, one of Wagner's highest achievements, given with great pathos and dramatic power by Frau Materna, enabled the audience to forget and forgive the unfortunate omissions.

At the sixth concert, May 19th, we had the Philadelphia March, a repetition of the *Meistersinger* and *Götterdämmerung*, and a short but most interesting selection from *Tristan und Isolde* (first performed in Munich, in 1865, under the direction of Hans von Bülow). The prelude and Isolde's death, at the close of the third act, were played by the band, and a short portion of the second act, commencing at the words, "O sink' hernieder," was finely sung by Frauen Materna and Grün, and Herr Unger, and enthusiastically encored.

At the conclusion of the festival, amid loud and prolonged cheering, Wagner appeared, and was presented with a laurel-wreath and a complimentary address from the orchestra, signed by the principal members. Richter was next summoned, and received a bâton and an address from the orchestra, expressing, in short but simple language, the genuine admiration entertained for him by every member of the band. Herr Wilhelmj received also a bow for his valuable and courteous assistance as leader of the orchestra. We have not spoken of the audiences: the first concert was well attended, but each concert showed an increase, and at the fifth and last concert the large hall was completely filled. Many of the concerts were attended by members of the Royal Family.

The fine performances of the band of 160 performers testify to the patient and earnest labours of Herr Richter and Mr. E. Dannreuther. Herr Richter will long be remembered for his admirable conducting; but praise is superfluous; it is sufficient to say, *He was conductor of the Bayreuth Festival.* J. S. S.

Foreign Correspondence.

MUSIC IN NORTH GERMANY.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

LEIPZIG, May, 1877.

ALTHOUGH we are at present in the dead season, the past four weeks have offered an abundance of musical entertainments. Before all we have to mention the appearance on our stage of Frau Marie Wilt, from Vienna. Frau Wilt is decidedly a dramatic singer. Her high soprano voice is of such power and quality as to fill the greatest halls; and we have heard no one to compete with her, except, in former years, the well-known Frau Burde-Ney. Frau Wilt's singing is powerfully enhanced by the excellence of her acting, and she has created quite a sensation by her performances of Valentine, in the *Huguenots*, Aida, and other highly dramatic parts. Yet Frau Wilt is not

a perfect artist; the beauty of her voice and the passion of her acting will always ensure her success on the stage, but with regard to technique her intonation leaves much to be desired.

The eminent violinist, Don Pablo Sarasate, gave a concert at the theatre, and excited, by his performance of Bruch's fine Violin Concerto, conducted by the composer, such enthusiasm as is seldom met with in our public.

Equally interesting was a *matinée*, given at the Blüthner Hall by the American pianist, Mr. A. Carpe, from Cincinnati, who, by his rendering of Robert Schumann's "Études Symphoniques," and Beethoven's c minor Sonata (Op. 111), proved himself a genuine and skilful artist.

The Royal Conservatoire gave an entertainment on the 22nd April, in anticipation of his Majesty King Albert's birthday. It opened with a very pretty choral piece, "Salvum fac regem," composed by Mr. Charles Vincent, from Sunderland. Amongst the numberless performances by pupils of the establishment we mention, as most worthy of distinction, that of Beethoven's c sharp minor Sonata (Op. 27, No. 2,) by Herr Bertrand Roth, from Plauen; and that of Chopin's F minor "Ballade," by Miss Helen Hopekirk, from Edinburgh.

The first three public examination concerts of the Conservatoire at the Gewandhaus brought forward finished and artistic performances of Reinecke's Pianoforte Concerto in F sharp minor, by Herr Bertrand Roth, and of Henselt's Concerto, by Herr Fritz Blumer, from Glarus. Miss Kate Ockleston, from Knutsford, near Manchester, played the last two movements of Beethoven's c minor Concerto in a very excellent manner. Schumann's Pianoforte Concerto, played by Mr. Charles Rowland, from Brighton, but which we did not hear, has been mentioned to us as having received an accurate and conscientious rendering.

MUSIC IN VIENNA.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

VIENNA, May 12th, 1877.

A SEASON as unusual a one as has ever been is at last closed. What an immense amount of music and expenditure of effort has been employed to excite the appetite of the public! Concert and opera have tried to cut out one another; singers and instrumentalists have fought to gain applause. Now all is over, and another leaf in our musical chronicle is filed to tell our successors on which step of culture, taste, and perfection we have stood.

Passing over many private concerts, particularly those of pianists, I mention only one, given by Herr Dr. Ganschbacher, to make known his pupils. Ganschbacher, one of our professors of singing in the Conservatoire, is much esteemed for his excellent method. A very elegant audience was present, and applauded the efforts of the pupils, many of whom are already engaged for the stage; the ladies Widl, Prager, and Beck, and the gentlemen Tunk, Liebau, Widl, and Prager having accepted engagements in our Hofoper.

Herr Hellmesberger has closed his quartett-cyclus of chamber-music. In the course of six evenings we heard stringed-quartetts by Mozart, Beethoven, Schumann, Brahms, Goldmark, and Herbeck; the quintett by Beethoven, and ottetto by Schubert; the piano-violoncello sonata (Op. 69) by Beethoven; piano trios by Volkmann and Brahms; quartetts by Brahms and Schubert; and a quintetto by Griener. The pianoforte part was performed by Fr. Joall, Herren Brahms, Door, Epstein, and Schenner.

The Conservatoire showed in five performances its present state in different branches. There were two performances by the school of the drama; two concerts for singing—concerted and solo-playing; and one performance of the Dramatic Opera School. Each offered pleasing, and sometimes surprising, proofs of the solid method, as well as of the talents of the recruits in music and drama. In concerted playing particularly, Director Hellmesberger can boast of his pupils. His orchestra of young students does not shrink from any task. It was a

pleasure to hear the whole of the music to *Egmont*, and the accompaniment to the concertos of Chopin, Beethoven and others, and to the opera-numbers. Of virtuosos a very young pupil, Arnold Rosenblum, astonished by his delivery of Beethoven's violin concerto. He is a pupil of Professor Heissler, the instructor also of the talented young Bertha Hafft. The Opera School performed fragments from Gounod's *Faust*, *Romeo and Julietta* by Vaccaj (the finale-duetto, often substituted for that in Bellini's opera), *Le roi la dit* by Delibes, and the whole of the *Liederspiel* by Mendelssohn.

Once more the Komische Oper, after weeks of repose, opened for one evening, for the benefit of the veteran Herr G. Hölzel, our best bass-buffo, formerly of the Hofoper, whence he was abruptly dismissed for having sung, in Marschner's opera *Templer und Jüdin*, the proscribed words "Ora pro nobis," instead of the revised version. Hölzel now celebrated his fifty years' activity on the stage, from which, at the same time, he took leave for ever. The work chosen was Lortzing's comic opera *Der Wildschütz*, in which Hölzel performed the school-master, Baculus, one of his best rôles. The popular singer was received as an old favourite, and the whole performance was as well as was possible in the present unfortunate condition of this theatre. All the members are now dispersed; the house is closed, and the hammer will decide who shall be its future proprietor.

The Hofoper is for the present fighting against the recent past and the difficulty of extending the interest of a winter season to the now-coming summer season.

The Italian Opera season is over; the first attraction of the *Walküre* has passed; the only interest now lies in the Gastspiele of eminent singers. For the moment Frau Lucca is here; Frä. Etelka Gerster, having so quickly become famous, is promised; the rest are strangers. The last Italian opera (3rd May) was *Il Trovatore*, performed four times during the season, as often as *La Traviata*, in which opera Sig. Masini had his *rentré*, singing also in *Rigoletto* (Il Duca) and *La Favorita* (Fernando). It was a delight to hear a singer of such a well-trained school, though, as an actor he is poor enough. Sig. Nicolini was much applauded as Maurico, Ernesto, and Idreno. Sig. Zucchini, after his indisposition, was heard only once more as *Don Pasquale*, in which rôle he excelled as formerly. Sig. Stozzi showed a number of good qualities, whereas Sig. Fiorini was a *triste* apparition, especially as Meistofele, acting like another Samiel. Sgra. Trebelli won more and more the favour of the public; she performed Maddalena, Lenore (*La Favorita*), Sibel, and once more the rôles of Assur and Azucena. Sgra. Patti, the star of stars, was the never-failing favourite as Gilda, Leonora, Margherita, Violetta, and Norina; she repeated also *Semiramide*; her benefit (*Faust*) turned the stage into a garden of garlands and bouquets. The *Walküre* has been performed twelve times with general interest; the whole *Ring des Nibelungen* is likewise promised, as the direction have acquired the right of its performance. Before Hofkapellmeister Herr Hans Richter departed for London, he conducted the *Meistersinger*, which we had not heard for two years. The other representations were of little importance and, in general, very little visited.

Before giving, as usual, the monthly programme of the operas, let me say a few words about the defunct singer Caroline Ungher, rectifying and supplementing your note in No. 77, p. 84. This famous singer was born October 23rd, 1803, and made her *début* in our German opera on February 24th, 1821, as Dorabella in Mozart's *Mädchenreise*. In 1824 she was engaged at the Italian Opera. The rôle of Cherubino she performed on the 4th September; Mme. Fodor was the Susanna, who then sang Cherubino's aria "Voi che sapete." Ungher and the eminent Mlle. Sonntag sang together, not only in Beethoven's 9th symphony, but also in the same year (December, 1824), in Handel's *Jephtha*, performed by the Ton Künstler-Societät (the present Haydn-Verein).

Operas performed from April 12th to May 12th:—*Walküre* (five times), *Il Trovatore* (twice), *Meistersinger*, *La Traviata*, *Freischütz*, *Rigoletto*, *Hans Heiling*, *Goldene Krenz* (twice), *Semiramide*, *Don Pasquale*, *La Favorita*, *Fliegende Holländer*, *Margherita*, *Carmen*, *Tannhäuser*, *Romeo und Julia*, *Tell*, *Aida*, *Afrikanerin*.

Reviews.

New Gradus ad Parnassum. 100 Pianoforte Studies, selected, the fingering supplemented, and revised by E. PAUER, Section I.—School of the Staccato. Section K.—School of the Legato. Section L.—School for the Left Hand. London: Augener & Co.

SECTION I. treats, as its name purports, of a matter of the last importance for pianists; and is, as its table of contents shows, very rich and full. The keyed-instrument-using animal will find it a pasturage abounding in wholesome fodder, which, if properly chewed, will greatly conduce to his comfort, increase his strength, and enable him to do work previously impossible to him. But all depends on the chewing, supposing the digestive apparatus to be in a healthy state. We think it would be a desirable thing if students would ponder a little more on the intimate connection between cause and effect. The blacksmith wields his sledge with the whole muscular force of his arms, but that is not the way in which the goldsmith handles his hammer when busy over some delicate piece of work. Let the student of staccato-playing take the goldsmith for his model. There are different kinds of staccato, in the execution of which, as it were, hammers of different weight have to be employed. A variety of material is offered in the section now under discussion. The light step of the fairies may be practised in the studies by Mendelssohn, Liszt (after Paganini's first capriccio for the violin), and Thalberg; spirits of a coarser essence and darker aspect, spirits of the earth, not of the air, are busy in Hiller's study; the human element, in various manifestations, from feminine gracefulness down to masculine loudness, is represented by the studies of Weber (Momento Capriccioso), Taubert (*Alla Turca*), Weyse, Kalkbrenner, Mayer, Loeschhorn, Kessler, and Döhler. Of Weyse (we had already a study of his in the first section), who is one of those composers introduced by this work for the first time to a wider circle of British pianists, we will, according to promise, say a few words. C. E. F. Weyse was born at Altona, in 1774, and, after passing the greater part of his life in Copenhagen, died in 1842. In Schumann's critical writings we find three notices of his works; two refer to studies, one to an overture. The enthusiastic criticism of Weyse's Op. 8 (Eight Studies) begins thus:—"Unfortunately we know nothing of the works of this composer (who has also written symphonies, operas, and church-music) but the above studies and *Bravours Allegros* for pianoforte. The latter put us in mind of the verdict of a competent judge (Moscheles), according to whom Weyse has secured for himself a place among the first of living pianoforte composers."

Section K, the School of the Legato, contains two studies by Mendelssohn, three by Schumann, one by Hummel, and one by Henselt, all of which, with the exception of the last-named, are in the strict style—indeed, two of them are fugues. No. 85 is the second fugue (D major) from Mendelssohn's "Six Preludes and Fugues (Op. 35)"; No. 86, the first (D minor) of Schumann's Four Fugues (Op. 92). Seeing that, on the whole, the independence and continuity of the parts are preserved, no exception will be taken to our classification of Schumann's studies after Paganini (No. 3 from Op. 3, and No. 6 from Op. 10). Henselt's study is written in a different style. One hand sings a melody, and at the same time plays an accompaniment, or part of one, either the bass or chords, the latter being struck a little later than the notes of the melody. Sometimes the two hands sing a duet. The usefulness of this section needs no pointing out, it speaks for itself. We would propose *Liberté, égalité, fraternité* as an appropriate motto for Section K.

This last section (L) of the *Gradus*, the School for the Left Hand, may be divided into two sub-divisions—one containing ten studies for two hands, with the most difficult work assigned to the left; and the other, four studies by Taubert, Döhler, Pauer, and Willmers, which are for the left hand alone. In part of the one by Döhler, however, we find the right hand employed in painting a golden background for the figures done by the left. Nearly all series of studies provide more material as practice for the right than for the left hand. The consequence is that, unless the student looks out specially for additional material for the neglected hand, its executive

capability will remain inferior to that of its partner. It is a very good plan to make the two hands exchange their parts whenever things are unequally divided between them. This is done by many pianists, but requires a little thought and management, as, of course, the parts cannot always be transferred bodily from one to the other; sometimes the proceeding is wholly impracticable. A specimen of such a friendly exchange of duties is to be seen in the study No. 94, in which Brahms arranges the rondo (*Al moto continuo*) of Weber's C major sonata (Op. 24) so that the left hand has to execute the semiquaver figure which runs through the whole movement. Seeing how really good left-hand studies are scattered here, there, and everywhere, over innumerable series of studies, and how desirable it is for every player to attain an equal mastery over both hands, we cannot but feel grateful to Herr Pauer for having brought together such an excellent collection. If we merely name the contributors to this section whom we have not yet referred to, it is not because their contributions are less valuable, but because comment is superfluous; they are Loeschhorn, Mayer, Hiller, Henselt, and Chopin.

Having reached the end of the work, we will briefly sum up what we have said and thought about it. Although some of the eleven special schools of which this work consists might perhaps with advantage have been enlarged, we must admit that most of them answer all demands that fairly can be made, and all, without exception, are good as far as they go. It only remains for us to say that the promises of the first section are amply fulfilled by the rest of the work; and now, as when we reviewed the first instalment, we hope that the enterprise of the editor and publishers may receive the deserved reward—a wide circulation, and a favourable recognition of the "New Gradus ad Parnassum."

Rustic Scenes for the Pianoforte. No. 1, Rustic Dance; No. 2, Forester's Song; No. 3, Curfew; No. 4, Harvest Home. Op. 9. Composed by A. C. MACKENZIE. London: Augener & Co.

THIS is not the first time that Mr. Mackenzie's name appears in these columns; only lately a series of pieces for the pianoforte was favourably noticed. In the "Rustic Scenes," the composer does not display the whole potency of his talent; he evidently wrote with a purpose, and wisely limited the output, to use a miner's expression, to the demand. His object seems to have been to furnish a number of moderately easy pieces, which should be at once pleasing and respectable. This he has fully accomplished: the simple, well-proportioned forms of the Scenes are filled with melodious, easily comprehensible thoughts, which testify alike to the good taste and craftsmanship of the composer. If we were asked to which pieces we give the preference, we should name the "Curfew" and the "Forester's Song," without, however, disparaging the pretty "Rustic Dance," and lively "Harvest Home." Although these pieces will, no doubt, make many friends among the lovers of short pieces of a lighter genre—for it must not be thought that they are mere *pieces instructives*—they will be especially welcomed by teachers who object to the *execution* (as a friend of ours significantly calls it) of the sonatas of Beethoven, and other similar difficult works of the great masters, by technically and intellectually undeveloped pupils, and who disapprove still more of the playing of the insipid inanities and showy vulgarities of our fashionable drawing-room literature. In short, Mr. Mackenzie has done well, and we only wish that some of our talented pianoforte composers, who now prostitute their art by the publication of musical fireworks, would go and do likewise.

Fifty Harpsichord Lessons by DOMENICO SCARLATTI. Selected, revised, and fingered by E. PAUER. London: Augener & Co.

THIS selection of fifty pieces from Domenico Scarlatti's numerous works will be considered by many a welcome addition to their musical libraries. Among other advantages which this publication has over similar Continental ones (an English one does not exist, to our knowledge) is that of keeping the golden mean with regard to quantity. Czerny's so-called complete edition (pub-

lished by Tobias Haslinger, Vienna) contains 200 pieces, which is perhaps too much; Bülow's selection, only eighteen, which is hardly enough. Moreover the latter artist's edition is more than a selection, it is a thorough revision, in the course of which he adds and cuts out bars, fills in, lightens, and improves the harmonies, &c. If we admit the right of treating an old master in such a manner, we must also admit that Bülow accomplished his task with consummate skill and taste. The edition, however, has one great drawback: it does not show us which are the changes made by the editor; he simply invites the player to compare his text with Czerny's. Herr Pauer proceeds in a very different way: the original is left intact by him, and his occasional suggestions for the removal of harmonic crudities and traces of negligence, often met with in Scarlatti's works, are printed in small type along with the original reading. We do not always feel inclined to accept Herr Pauer's suggestions, but we grant that this is a matter of taste, and that, as it is open to us to choose between Scarlatti's own and the editor's proposed reading, or to devise one for ourselves, we have no reason to complain. Indeed, in some cases it is almost, if not wholly, impossible to change anything without destroying the composer's idea. As an instance in point, we refer the reader to No. 8, pages 24 and 25 of Pauer's edition, where there are some execrable harmonic combinations. Still we must say, with Polonius, "Though this be madness, yet there is method in it." Bülow too, in his preface to his Scarlatti selection, quotes a passage from another sonata as interesting on account of its "not quite unmethodical madness." With regard to the present edition, we may add that it is fingered by the editor, and is prefaced by a biographical sketch and a portrait of the composer, the whole being carefully edited and nicely got up. So much for the editor and his work, now to the composer and his. Domenico Scarlatti, the great son of a great father (Alessandro Scarlatti), shows the power of his genius best in this—that, although a contemporary of two such men as Bach and Handel, the latter of whom he admired so much that he followed him from Venice to Rome, he preserved his full artistic independence. In the compositions of no other composer for the harpsichord or its sister instruments, of his or any earlier time, do we find such a rich variety of bold combinations and sprightly figurations, so peculiarly adapted to the instrument, so distinct from the organ style, as in those of D. Scarlatti. Freedom, ease, and brilliance seem to us the most striking features of his style. Some of his favourite manners are the skipping of the hands from one note to another more than an octave distant (see for instances Pauer's edition, Nos. 18, 49, &c.)—in connection with which we must remember the narrower keys of the old instruments—the crossing of the hands (Nos. 1, 15, &c.), and the intertwining and mutual relieving of the hands (Nos. 6, 16, 22, 23, &c.). Nearly all of the fifty pieces have retained most of their freshness; they are more than curiosities. The scherzo-like movements deserve special notice. Bülow says, "Humour and irony make their first appearance in music with D. Scarlatti," and to avoid misunderstanding, adds Schopenhauer's definition of humour as "gravity hidden behind jest," of irony as "jest hidden behind gravity." There are also some specimens of fugal writing; these are the well-known cats' fugue (No. 47), and a double fugue (No. 44). The pieces are sonatas only in the old sense of the word "sonatas," i.e., pieces to be played on an instrument, in contradistinction to cantatas, i.e., pieces to be sung. These sonatas consist generally of one movement, and mostly of two parts; they have not the contrasting second subject of our modern sonatas, although in some cases we see the germ of it. As to modulation, we find that the first parts of all the pieces in major modulate to and close on the key of the dominant, while those of the minor ones close sometimes on the parallel major key (No. 29), sometimes on the key of the dominant major (No. 20, &c.), although most frequently on the key of the dominant minor (Nos. 14, 19, 22, &c.). A comparison of the old with the new form will prove as instructive as the acquaintance with the contents will be interesting and pleasant.

Five Waltzes for Piano Duet (Op. 8), by M. MOSZKOWSKI: Augener & Co.

OF the vast number of new compositions which from time to time

we receive for review, it may certainly be averred that the great majority consist of the worst trivialities, which may be best passed over in silence, and of respectable mediocrities which do not suggest a word of comment. The reviewer, groaning under the task of examining so heterogeneous a mass, is, however, sometimes rewarded for his pains by the satisfaction he experiences on unexpectedly coming upon a work of sterling merit, and by the delight which he feels in imparting the result of such discoveries to his readers. It is with such feelings of satisfaction that we have lit upon these "Five Waltzes," by M. Moszkowski, a composer with whose name we have now met for the first time. M. Moszkowski is resident in Berlin; and we are further told that his compositions have been favourably received in Germany. Like Brahms's waltzes, these are not waltzes to dance to; and, like Brahms, M. Moszkowski has chosen the waltz measure as a form in which to incorporate some very pleasing and poetical ideas. Anyone who, nowadays, selects the waltz-form as a vehicle for the display of his ideas, naturally comes under the suspicion of having been influenced by Brahms. We can trace no such influence at work here, and only such a resemblance as might easily arise from the artistic earnestness with which both composers are evidently imbued. More widely developed than those of Herr Brahms, and admirably and effectively written as pianoforte duets, these waltzes of M. Moszkowski's are remarkable for their fresh, vigorous, tuneful, sprightly, piquant, and artistic character. In justification of the epithet last made use of, we may point to No. 3, in which canon in the octave and fifth is largely employed in a strikingly clever, but none the less effective manner. If we were called upon to describe M. Moszkowski's style by its points of likeness to that of one composer more than another, we should say that, notwithstanding its remarkable originality, it is marked by certain traits which, to some extent, recall that of M. Asanitschewsky (Rubinstein's successor as principal of the Conservatoire of Music at St. Petersburg), the composer of some of the most charming pianoforte duets, &c., we have met with, but which do not seem to be known in England, except to a select circle with Leipzig experiences. On trying over these waltzes of M. Moszkowski's for the first time, players will be struck with the boldness of some of his harmonies, and perhaps be inclined to question their correctness. But with a little perseverance, the ear soon becomes accustomed to them; and what at first may have seemed harsh and crude, soon comes to be recognised as an additional zest to the pleasure both of playing them and of listening to them. To duet-players of somewhat advanced tastes and acquirements, they may be confidently recommended. So much pleasure have we derived from them, that we look forward with impatience to making acquaintance with more of the same composer's works.

Impromptu-Caprice, and Legend, pour le Piano, par OLIVER A. KING. Novello, Ewer & Co.

THE author of these two pieces is still, we believe, or at least till recently was, a student of the Leipzig Conservatoire of Music. As students' work, both betray a commendable earnestness, and the attainment of a ready means of expression. The musical analyst, however, who seeks for "first principles," will be struck rather by the mode of their treatment than by the matter treated. In musical composition we cannot but think that more depends upon the discovery of primary ideas than upon the manner of their presentation. The first may be regarded as a God-given faculty; the second as a matter of scholarship; but both may be strengthened and enlarged by persevering study. Mr. King, of whom we know no more than can be guessed at from these specimens of his work, seems to us to be possessed of real musical feeling, and reverence for his art, and to have attained considerable skill in writing down his ideas. Still, we cannot but regret that he has not shown himself more self-critical, and more self-sacrificing, as he might easily have done by avoiding the introduction of many passages which, though artistic in appearance, are ungrateful to execute. In this direction, Mendelssohn will be found a better guide than either Schumann or Sterndale Bennett.

Album Leaf (Album-Blatt): and Two Lyric Pieces for the Pianoforte. By JOSEPH LÖW. Augener & Co.

ALL three of these pieces are cast in the miniature form, which Schumann raised to a pitch of artistic importance previously unexampled, except, perhaps, in some of Beethoven's "Bagatelles," and which has since found so many imitators, of various degrees of excellence. Among them, we think, Herr Löw, judging from the specimens before us, claims a high place. Of the three, the Album Leaf—a slow movement, based on a single idea, richly harmonised—is unquestionably the best. It was originally written in the key of F sharp major, but as a concession to amateur players, who have a horror of six sharps, has also been published in the key of F, with one flat. The two Lyric Pieces, though respectively entitled "Suspense," and "Confession," are more lyrical than characteristic, and may be fitly described as "songs without words," and are of a pleasing quality, but less striking than the "Album Leaf." All three are to be commended as conducive to good taste, and are tolerably easy to execute.

An Air composed for Holworthy Church Bells, and varied for the Organ. By SAMUEL SEBASTIAN WESLEY. Novello & Co.

IT is a matter for regret that the celebrated organist and church composer, whose death was but lately mourned, has left us comparatively few compositions for the instrument of which he was so great a master, and every addition which can be made to the list of his published works will therefore be cordially welcomed.

The organ piece named above is said to have been a favourite with the composer himself, by whom it was frequently played. The work, nevertheless, remained in manuscript during Dr. Wesley's life, although its possession was frequently coveted by organists who had the good fortune to hear it.

The composition is based upon a simple air which necessarily lies within the restricted compass of an octave in the diatonic scale. The melody (in $\frac{4}{4}$ time) is first given out in plain harmony, in which, however, constant use is made of those suspensions which are so much a characteristic of the composer's style. The theme is then assigned to the right hand, while the left has a passage of flowing semiquavers upon another manual. This is followed by an episode of much beauty, in which the semiquaver movement is transferred to the right hand, the left being occupied with a new theme played upon a reed. After some charming modulations, the original air is again heard with further variety in the treatment, and the piece concludes with a highly interesting coda.

We would advise every organist who has classical taste to procure this work.

The Organist's Quarterly Journal. Part 34, vol. 5. Novello & Co.

THE April number of this periodical contains organ pieces by E. Silas, D. Hemingway, Hamilton Clarke, G. B. Lissant, E. T. Driffield, and Walter H. Sangster. The contribution by the first-named composer is perhaps the most valuable. It is a nicely written melody in E minor, with a pleasing episode in the tonic major key. The harmonies of the *Andante Pastorale* by D. Hemingway, are not quite unexceptionable, but the music shows nice feeling for melody.

Mr. Clarke's "Offertoire" begins boldly, but the composer seems to have soon grown tired of his own theme, for the composition as a whole hangs together somewhat loosely. The remaining compositions are respectively named "Air Variée," "Andante con moto," and "Prelude." None of the three is sufficiently interesting to require comment.

Two Andantes for the Organ. By GEORGE MARSDEN. Mus. Bacc. Cantab. Forsyth Brothers.

THERE is much that is meritorious in the two pieces here named. The general style is unaffected; and the writing is on the whole good. We are pleased, moreover, to observe considerably more

clearness of form than we are accustomed to find in the works of organ composers whose names are new to us.

The Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis. Set to music by H. WALMSLEY LITTLE. Weekes & Co.

Our stores of English church music can scarcely be said to be enriched by compositions such as that under notice. The music certainly contains nothing that offends us much, except perhaps the ugly descent of the leading note in the second bar of the treble solo; but this is nearly all that can be said in its favour.

It is fervently to be wished that aspiring composers may some day learn that in order to produce anything of real value to church choirs, something more is wanted than a mere string of musical platitudes.

Twelve Offertory Sentences. Set to music by F. W. HIRD. Novello & Co.

Unlike the work just noticed, some of these little pieces possess a certain character of their own. We can, indeed, heartily commend such music as that set to the words commencing "Give alms," and if all the "Sentences" were of equal value, we should have nothing but praise to bestow. There are, however, various unfortunate blemishes to be found on the pages before us. The writer shows a curious partiality for taking the leading note down in a manner which is not only clumsy but also unvoiced; and the extraordinary prominence given to the major third of the tonic chord at the conclusion of sentence No. 3 can only be productive of bad effect. We have no wish to enumerate in detail every point to which objection might be made, because there is so much evidence of ability shown by the composer of these little movements that we would not unduly depreciate his work. We nevertheless think that his present effort is chiefly valuable as giving promise of better things to come.

Concerts, &c.

CRYSTAL PALACE.

As usual, the winter series of Saturday concerts was supplemented, on the 5th ult., by a concert for the benefit of Mr. Manns, who, on his appearance in the orchestra, was warmly welcomed by a very numerous audience, evidently brought together as much by the desire to testify their esteem for him and their satisfaction with his efforts during the past season, as by the attractive qualities of the programme put forth. It is worthy of observation that the instrumental selection, whether designedly or not, consisted exclusively of "programme-music," i.e. (to adopt the definition given in the programme-book), music in which the endeavour is made to represent a given scene, or occurrence, by the aid of instruments only. Though such music is now common enough, many still seem to regard it as an innovation of modern times, forgetting that the practice dates at least from the time of Sebastian Bach, as may be seen by reference to his well-known capriccio, "Sopra la Lontananza del Frate dilettissimo," attributed to the year 1715. The instrumental selection included Sterndale Bennett's fantasia overture, "Paradise and the Peri;" Weber's Concert-stück; Rubinstein's Humoresque, for orchestra, "Don Quixote;" and Beethoven's "Pastoral" symphony. Bennett's overture, as we all know, was suggested by an episode in Moore's *Lalla Rookh*, the substance and sentiment of which are musically reproduced and enhanced in a strikingly graphic and forcibly poetic manner. It is, perhaps, not so generally known that Weber's Concert-stück also rests upon a poetical basis. According to Sir Julius Benedict, Weber's pupil, the story which it tells, and which we quote from the programme-book, stands as follows:—

"The lady sits in her tower. She gazes sadly into the distance. Her knight has been for years in the Holy Land. Shall she ever see him again? Battles have been fought, but no news of him who is so dear to her. In vain have been all her prayers. A fearful vision rises to her mind. Her knight is lying on the battle-field, deserted and alone—his heart's blood is ebbing fast away. Could she but be by his side—could she but die with him. She falls exhausted and senseless. But, hark! what is that distant sound?

What glimmers in the sunlight from the wood? What are those forms approaching? Knights and squires with the cross of the Crusades—banners waving—acclamations of the people—and there—it is he! She sinks into his arms. Love is triumphant. Happiness without end. The very woods and waves sing the song of love. A thousand voices proclaim its victory."

This favourite work was admirably rendered by Mlle. Anna Mehlig, whose skill as a pianist, both as regards her technical attainments and fine poetic feeling, is of a very high order indeed. M. Rubinstein's "Don Quixote," which on the occasion of its being previously performed at the Crystal Palace in February, 1872, was described at length, and severely, but not unjustly, criticised in our review column as "programme-music carried to the verge of lunacy," is a work, the extreme cleverness of which in point of its general conception, construction, and orchestration, cannot be denied. The attempt to depict scenes from the life of the Knight of La Mancha in so realistic a manner as M. Rubinstein has done, can only be regarded as a joke—clever, it is true, but a sorry one, and one which led him to disregard the canon laid down by Beethoven that music resting upon a poetical basis should be "mehr Ausdruck der Empfindung als Malerei," i.e. "rather the record of impressions than an actual representation of facts." That the "Pastoral" symphony and the other poetical works we have mentioned were, perhaps purposely, placed in such close contiguity to M. Rubinstein, we could not but regard as a wholesome rebuke. *Don Quixote* was conducted by its composer in person; that it was applauded by the audience we could not but think was to be put down to their feelings of politeness towards so eminent a guest, rather than to any wish to hear his work again. In strong contrast to the vagaries of *Don Quixote* the beauties of the "Pastoral" symphony, which shortly followed, were probably never made more apparent. In the vocal department Brahms's "Neue Liebes-lieder Waltzer" (Op. 65), heard here for the first time, formed an important item of attraction. This second set of vocal waltzes with pianoforte accompaniment for four hands are similar in their scope to the previous set by the same composer which have met with so much favour. To them they are at least equal in merit; by some they are thought to be superior. With Mlle. Mehlig and Mr. Walter Bache at the pianoforte, and the vocal parts entrusted to Mlle. Sophie Löwe, Mlle. Redeker, Mr. Shakespeare, and Mr. Pyatt, they received an admirable rendering; but we could not think that their full effect was realised in so vast a space as that of the Crystal Palace Concert-room. Songs by Handel, Schubert, Rubinstein, and A. Manns, contributed by Mlle. Enriquez and Herr Henschel, completed an attractive but somewhat lengthy scheme.

A stage performance of the *Alkestis* of Euripides, with Mr. Henry Gadsby's admirable music, which met with so much favour on its production towards the close of last year, was given in the Opera-Theatre on the 19th ult.

ALEXANDRA PALACE.

This building, which has now passed into the hands of the London Financial Association, was re-opened to the public on Thursday, May 10th, and the occasion was musically signalled by a concert in the Central Hall, the programme consisting entirely of works by English composers, the solo vocalists also being of the same nationality, with the exception of Madame Osgood. The only novelties were works written specially for the occasion by Messrs. Ebenezer Prout, Wingham, and Eaton Faning; of these that of the latter, "The Song of the Vikings," was by far the best. It is simply a part song, with free orchestral accompaniment, but full of dignity and breadth, and was exactly suited to the requirements of the situation. Mr. Faning was deservedly recalled after its performance, which under his own baton received every justice. Mr. Prout also contributed a chorus, "Hail to the Chief!" of Handelian character, and like everything that proceeds from this gentleman's pen, thoroughly well written. We regret that we cannot speak in terms of commendation with respect to the remaining novelty, "A Choral Overture," by Mr. T. Wingham. Written for orchestra, organ, and chorus, it is certainly ambitious in design, but vague in form, and decidedly wanting in originality, defects not atoned for by the scoring, which is of the most conventional description. The remainder of the programme was made up of familiar compositions calling for no remark. Previous to the concert, and again in the evening, Mr. Frederic Archer, who resumes his old post, gave recitals on the grand organ to appreciative audiences. For the ensuing season classical concerts, English operatic performances in the theatre, and the numerous attractions offered to the public on former occasions, are again promised, and the "North London" Palace has, we confidently hope, at last entered on a career of prosperity.

PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.

THERE were two disappointments at the fifth concert. Mrs. Beesley was to have played Sterndale Bennett's pianoforte concerto in C minor, and Sig. Piatti a concerto of his own. Illness prevented Mrs. Beesley's appearing, and Sig. Piatti was suddenly called away, we believe, by the illness of his father. Mrs. Beesley was replaced by Sig. Breitner, who came forward with Liszt's clever and effective adaptation, for pianoforte and orchestra, of Schubert's fantasia in C, Op. 15, the value of which, in spite of the denunciations of carping critics with which it was at first received, now seems to be generally recognised both by pianists and their hearers. To the task of executing it, Sig. Breitner, a pupil of M. Rubinstein, brought a surprising amount of digital power to bear, but which, as one could not but regret, was not accompanied by a similar display of feeling. So harsh, indeed, was the tone which he sometimes elicited from the piano, as to suggest the suspicion that he must have made his studies upon a dumb piano. But to some extent it was probably the instrument, which was neither a Broadwood nor an Erard, that was at fault. An able substitute for Sig. Piatti was found in the person of Herr Hausmann, of Berlin, who, by the remarkable volume of tone which he elicited from his instrument, and by the apparent ease with which he overcame the difficulties of Raff's concerto in D minor, for violoncello and orchestra (Op. 193), asserted his claims as a virtuoso of the first order. Of Raff's concerto we spoke at length in these columns on the occasion of its performance by Sig. Piatti at the Crystal Palace in April, 1876. Musically interesting, and affording the executant ample opportunities for display, it is as satisfactory a work of its class as any that we can recall. The novelty of the evening was a symphony in C (MS.), by E. Silas, a Dutch composer, who has long been resident among us, and is well known as the author of several ambitious works, which testify strongly their author's sound musicianship, but are not remarkable for their individuality. We call to mind a symphony of his (in E flat, if our memory serves us) which on its trial some years ago by the now defunct Musical Society of London, compared very favourably with other works submitted to a like ordeal, but which, when, subsequently at the Crystal Palace, it came to be pitted against symphonic works of recognised merit, was found wanting. So it was with the present work, which, though emanating from a musician evidently well versed in the routine of musical form and orchestration, seemed to us to lack the earnestness, dignity, profundity, and originality which we are wont to demand from a professedly new symphonic work. For its acceptance by the directors we are at a loss to account, unless it was that it seemed desirable to them to select a work of a diametrically opposite character to the symphony recently produced by Herr Brahms. The remaining orchestral works were the overtures to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Mendelssohn) and *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Mozart). Mme. Patey and Mr. Barton McGuckin were the vocalists.

The sixth concert, the first of two afternoon performances included in the scheme of the present season, commenced with Brahms's "Variations on a Theme by Haydn," for orchestra (Op. 56A), and ended with Mendelssohn's overture, "The Isles of Fingal" (Op. 26). Mozart's concerto in C for harp, flute, and orchestra, composed in London in 1778 for the Duc de Guisnes and his daughter, and of which we spoke on the first occasion of its being performed in London at Mr. John Thomas's concert of last year, was brought forward as a *quasi* novelty, the solo parts being sustained by Mr. John Thomas and Mr. Olaf Svendsen. Amateurs of the flute and harp, and admirers of Mozart, will be glad to learn that Mr. John Thomas has arranged the orchestral accompaniment for pianoforte and composed cadenzas for the flute and harp, and that in this form the work has now been published, probably for the first time, by Mr. Lamborn Cook—nearly a century after its composer's death. Sig. Papini, accompanied on the pianoforte by Mr. W. G. Cousins, was heard in Rust's sonata in D minor, which Mme. Norman-Neruda has done so much to popularise. The symphony was Beethoven's, in B flat, No. 4, and vocal pieces were contributed by Miss Robertson and Mlle. Redeker.

NEW PHILHARMONIC CONCERTS.

RUBINSTEIN'S "Ocean" symphony was brought to a hearing at the second concert, under the direction of Dr. Wylde, who may fairly be complimented upon the manner in which he succeeded in realising the composer's intentions, accomplishing the task of performing it within two minutes of Rubinstein's own tempo, as taken down by us on the occasion of his conducting it in person at the Crystal Palace. Though one could not but to some extent miss the presence and influence of the composer, the performance of the work, which was listened to with evident attention and satisfaction by a very numerous audience, was a highly creditable one. Herr

Wilhelmj gave so grand a reading of the first movement of Beethoven's violin concerto, in which he introduced an elaborate and appropriate *cadenza*, that one could not but regret that it was not followed up by the entire work. He was further heard in his clever paraphrase of the "Preislied," from Wagner's *Meistersinger*, which pleased so much that he was compelled to repeat it. The overtures were those to Weber's *Der Freischütz*, and Wagner's *Der Fliegende Holländer*. Herr Henschel was the only vocalist.

The third concert brought forward two *débütantes*—Mlle. Marguerite Pommereuil, a violinist from Paris, who played Max Bruch's concerto; and Mlle. Louisa Cognetti, from Naples, a pupil of Liszt's, who was heard in Weber's Concert-stück. Both are said to have created a favourable impression; but, as this concert took place at the same hour as one of the Wagner concerts at the Royal Albert Hall, we are not in a position to give further particulars.

THE BACH CHOIR.

As we learn from the programme-book of the present season, the Bach Choir consists of "a society of ladies and gentlemen amateurs, formed for the practice and performance of choral works of excellence of various schools, assisted by eight members of the choirs of St. Paul's Cathedral, the Chapel Royal, and Westminster Abbey," and, therefore, is not, as might be inferred from the distinctive title which has been adopted, one organised exclusively for the practice and performance of works by Bach. Opinions differ so much as to the manner in which, at the present date, Bach's works ought to be treated, that we cannot but pity the conductor who undertakes the task of presenting them, unless he has the hardiness to ignore contemporary criticism. There are some who think that Bach's works should be presented with as little alteration as possible; some think they should be re-scored to suit the requirements of ears accustomed to the modern orchestra; while others go so far as to maintain that they should not be performed at all, unless they can be presented exactly in the manner originally designed by their author. The conductor, therefore, who goes beyond Bach's works composed for voices only—and there is plenty to do in this direction—manifestly cannot hope to satisfy such divergent opinions. On other accounts, too, we think the so-called Bach Choir have done wisely in deciding not to limit their operations to the practice and performance of Bach's works.

The second concert, given at St. James's Hall, on the 25th of April, under the direction of Mr. Otto Goldschmidt, was a miscellaneous one. The first part of the programme included Handel's Coronation anthem, "The King shall Rejoice;" an unpublished motett for eight-part chorus and organ, "In Thee, O Lord, have I put my Trust," by the late Sir W. Sterndale Bennett; the *Sanctus* from Palestrina's *Missa Papa Marcelli*; and Bach's Church Cantata, "Ein feste Burg." Bennett's motett, which forms part of an unfinished anthem, bearing date, "October, 1855," and now performed for the first time, is a rare specimen of the purest eight-part writing, and at the same time replete with devotional and musical feeling. Palestrina's *Sanctus*, and especially Bach's cantata, were probably selected more on account of the ample scope for practice which they offered the choir than for their intrinsically attractive character. The studying of Bach's cantata, generally known as the "Reformation" cantata, and a miracle of elaboration and ingenuity, must have taxed the powers and perseverance of the choir to the utmost. Though we could not but regard the time at which the conductor took the long opening chorus as distressingly slow for both singers and listeners, the performance of the entire work was, on the whole, a very creditable one. In making certain changes and additions in the orchestration, the conductor was assisted by Mr. Crowther Alwyn. The solo vocal parts were sustained by Mme. Lemmens-Sherrington, Mr. W. G. Cummings, and Herr Henschel; the latter especially distinguishing himself by his masterly vocalisation, and clear enunciation in the air (with soprano chorus), "Our utmost might is all in vain."

The whole of the second part was taken up with Niels Gade's cantata, *Comala*—a work produced in Leipzig more than thirty years ago, but now heard for the first time, we believe, in London. In style, it is closely akin to that of the same composer's *Erl King's Daughter*; and though not of surpassing interest to the musical student, is a work admirably suited to the capacities and requirements of amateur choirs. Practising it must, therefore, doubtless have proved a welcome relief to the severer demands and austerities of Bach's cantata; but, either from lack of dramatic interest, or from its position after what had gone before, it failed to enlist the sympathies of the audience to the end. The principal vocal parts were well sustained by Mme. Lemmens-Sherrington, Mlle. A. Riego, Mlle. Gowa, and Herr Henschel.

* We take this opportunity of correcting an error which

inadvertently crept into our report of this society's performance of Bach's mass in B minor. It was therein stated that the wondrous horn solo in the "Quoniam" was accompanied by violoncellos instead of bassoons, as directed by Bach. We are assured that this was not the case; and that it was accompanied by bassoons, not violoncellos. The error, which we regret, seems to us, however, a very excusable one; and is to be attributed partly to the disadvantageous position for hearing which we occupied under one of the side galleries, and partly to the peculiar property which double-basses have of imparting a "string" tone to certain instruments employed in combination with them.

MUSICAL UNION MATINÉES.

SIGNOR BREITNER was again the pianist at the second matinée. Besides playing several solos, his choice of which varied in more particulars than one from those put down for him, did good service with MM. Papini and Lasserre, in Rubinstein's trio in B flat (Op. 52), a work which we are inclined to place among the best of his compositions in this class. Professor Ella reminds us that it was first played at the Musical Union on the occasion of M. Rubinstein's *début* in 1837; and again, subsequently, by Pauer, Leschetizky, and Jaell. We may add that when Dr. von Bülow, in 1874, wished to introduce a concerted work of Rubinstein's to a Monday Popular audience, this was the one he made choice of. The remaining concerted works for strings were Mozart's quartett in G, No. 1, and Mendelssohn's quintett in B flat (Op. 87). The last-named work, which has been more frequently heard at the Musical Union than any other of Mendelssohn's concerted pieces, was brought to a close with the adagio, the executants, at rehearsal, having unanimously thrown in their agreement with the opinion of a French critic, who observes that "On ne doit jamais nuire à l'émotion de cet bel adagio par le finale si peu intéressant."

M. Alphonse Duvernoy, from Paris, who, during the last six seasons, has been pretty regularly heard at the Musical Union, was the pianist at the third matinée. With Signor Papini and M. Lasserre, he did excellent service in Mendelssohn's favourite trio in C minor (Op. 66), and with M. Lasserre, in Rubinstein's mazurka in A major—No. 3 of "Trois Morceaux pour piano et violoncello" (Op. 11)—but, perhaps from the discovery of M. Rubinstein's presence in the room, seemed less at home with his solos—a couple of by no means remarkable pieces of his own; and Hiller's "Zur Gitarre." Nothing could have been more opposed to the composer's intention, or to Mme. Schumann's well-known mode of rendering it, than his reading of the last-named charming little piece. But though individuality of treatment, rather than reverence for composers' intentions, seems to be gradually becoming the rule of the day, we think we should fail in our duty were we to abstain from expressing surprise and discontent. The string quartetts were Haydn's in D, No. 79, and Beethoven's in E flat, No. 10 (Op. 74).

M. ANTON RUBINSTEIN'S RECITALS.

As a pianist, M. Anton Rubinstein must long ago have attained the height of his ambition, for it may certainly with truth be averred that no other pianist—not forgetting, however, Dr. von Bülow's triumphs—has for a continuance succeeded in attracting such numerous audiences. This is the more astonishing, because, as a rule, ignoring all other living composers but himself, his programmes of one year are very much the same as those of another, and beyond his own compositions contain but little that one has not heard at the hands of others. The truth seems to be that people go to hear him more to satisfy their curiosity as to *how* he will play than to exercise their judgment in regard to *what* he plays. Possessing an unlimited command over his instrument, he certainly infuses his own individuality into all he plays to a far greater degree than any other player we can name. Whether he raves and storms, as he does sometimes when carried away by his feelings, or whether he discourses the most delicate music, he compels the uninterrupted attention of his hearers. Though we cannot always agree with his readings, we cannot but listen.

M. Rubinstein commenced his present campaign with a wondrous performance of his famous arrangement of the overture to *Egmont*, an arrangement which, it is said, he has never taken the trouble to commit to paper, from a feeling that doing so would involve the employment of a system of at least four staves. This opening feat was one more calculated to astonish the unthinking among the audience than to conciliate those of sober tastes. On listening to it it has always been with the feeling that it has not so much been M. Rubinstein's aim to supply as truthful a reproduction of the orchestral effects of Beethoven's work as the pianoforte is capable of, as to show how much more in his hands can be got out of the

piano. Of a more legitimate scope was his choice of such works as a gigue and air with variations by Handel, a couple of nocturnes by Chopin and Field, a barcarolle by Liszt, a rich selection from Schumann (including "Warum," "Vogel als Prophet," "Abends," "Traumeswirren," and the "Études Symphoniques"), and a "Melodie" and "Barcarolle" of his own. With M. Rubinstein's interpretation of Schumann we can by no means express unqualified satisfaction, because, in spite of the immense amount of poetical feeling and technical perfection he brings to bear upon it, he seems to make it his aim to give as different as possible a rendering to that of Mme. Schumann, with whose "readings" we have so long been familiar, and which we have been wont to regard as traditional and strictly in accordance with the composer's intentions. This wilful disregard for precedent was again noticeable at his second recital, when he came forward with Schumann's "Carnival Scenes," in his performance of which he even went so far as to include the "Sphinxes," which it is Mme. Schumann's habit to omit, and which, for this reason, we opine, were never intended to be played, but were rather introduced by the composer as a joke. For the absence of a sonata at the first recital full amends were made at the second by the introduction of Beethoven's sonata in F minor—appropriately, but unauthentically, known as the "Appassionata"—which, rendered as it was in a manner thoroughly impassioned and free from undue exaggeration, served to display M. Rubinstein in his best light and humour as an interpreter of Beethoven. Indeed, throughout the afternoon M. Rubinstein was playing in his very best manner. Nothing could have been more refined than his unaffected rendering of a theme with variations in F minor by Haydn, and several of the quieter of Mendelssohn's "Lieder ohne Worte." Specially welcome was the fantasia in F minor (Op. 49) which headed a selection of five pieces by Chopin. Of five pieces of his own, a barcarolle, which had long been familiar to us in its original form as a pianoforte duet, pleased us the most.

MR. C. HALLÉ'S RECITALS.

MR. CHARLES HALLÉ, who, during the long period that he has been before the public, has done more than any other single artist to promulgate a taste for music of the highest class, commenced his seventeenth series of eight pianoforte recitals, at St. James's Hall, on the 4th ult. Last year, it will be remembered, he restricted himself to performing the entire series of Beethoven's sonatas—a feat which we should fancy no one but himself has attempted in public. This year, concerted music again forms the staple of his so-called recitals. For its due presentation, he has secured the valuable co-operation of Mme. Norman-Neruda, Herr C. Ries, Herr L. Straus, and Herr Franz Neruda, &c. As a speciality, it is promised that each programme shall contain a work by Johannes Brahms: among others, the quintett in F minor, the three quartetts for pianoforte and strings, the trio for pianoforte and strings, the trio for pianoforte, violin, and horn, &c. Each recital will terminate with a trio by Beethoven; the remaining items being selected from the works of masters universally recognised as "classic"; as well as from those of distinguished representatives of the modern school.

THE pupils of the Royal Normal College and Academy of Music gave a concert on the 15th ult., at Dudley House, by the kind permission of Lord and Lady Dudley. In the course of the concert, Sir Rutherford Alcock, the Treasurer, and Mr. F. J. Campbell, Principal of the Institution (of which the Duke of Westminster is President), addressed those present; and some large donations to the funds of the College were promised. It was stated that there is a large number of applications from the blind, to be admitted to the institution, which aims at giving them a thorough musical education, and making them capable of gaining independence by the practice of music as a profession.

MR. FRANCIS E. GLADSTONE, Mus. Bac., gave an organ recital at the Royal Albert Hall, on Saturday, the 5th ult. His programme stood as follows:—1. (a) Prelude and Fugue, (b) Allegretto (F. E. Gladstone); 2. Andante (F sharp minor) (S. S. Wesley); 3. (a) Meditation, (b) Fuga alla Handel (A. Guilmant); 4. (a) Trio (on a chorale), (b) Prelude and Fugue (A minor) (Bach); 5. (a) Meiody, (b) Fantasia with a chorale (H. Smart).

SIR HERBERT STANLEY OAKELEY, Professor of Music in Edinburgh University, had the honour of playing, by command, on the organ in St. George's Hall, Windsor Castle, on Saturday afternoon, April 28, before the Queen, the Duchess of Edinburgh, Princess Christian of Schleswig-Holstein, Princess Beatrice, and Prince Leopold, the following selection of music:—Prelude for organ (Brosig); Air, "But oh what art can reach, what human voice can reach the sacred organ's praise?" (Ode to St. Cecilia's Day), Allegro, Organ Concerto, No. 2, and Choruses, "The Nightingale" (Sale).

mon) and "Hail, Judaea, happy land" (*Yudas Maccabeus*) (Handel); Aria, "Mein gläubiges Herz" (Bach); Chorus, "Ave Verum" (Mozart); Choral Song, "Evening and Morning," "Comes at times a voice of days departed" (sung at Edinburgh, Aug. 17, 1876). The "Edinburgh" March (H. S. Oakeley).

At the final concert for the present season of the Borough of Hackney Choral Association, at the Shoreditch Town Hall, Signor Randegger's *Fridolin* was performed by a band and chorus of nearly 200, conducted by Mr. Ebenezer Prout. The soloists were Mrs. Osgood and Messrs. Shakespeare, George Fox, and Henry Pope. The work was most warmly received, the composer, who was present, being called for and enthusiastically cheered at the close of the performance.

Two concerts were given at Cambridge, on the 18th and 22nd ult., by the University Musical Society, which, under the guidance of Mr. C. Villiers Stanford, has of late shown increased vitality. The one was devoted to chamber-music, the other to orchestral and choral music. The novelties at the first were Brahms's "Neue Liebeslieder Walzer" (second set, Op. 65), and a sonata (MS.), for pianoforte and violin, by C. V. Stanford. The same composers were also responsible for the novelties of the second concert, viz., Brahms's "Rhapsodie," for alto solo and chorus of male voices, and Mr. Stanford's setting of the 66th Psalm for soli, chorus and orchestra, both, we believe, performed for the first time in England. The orchestral works were the overture to Wagner's *Meistersinger*, and Schumann's symphony in D minor, No. 4. Middle. Thekla Friedländer and Middle. Redeker were the vocalists at both; Herr Straus led the concerted chamber and orchestral works, and Mr. Stanford conducted.

Musical Notes.

THE solo vocalists engaged for the Handel Festival at the Crystal Palace are Mme. Adeline Patti, Mlle. Albani, Miss Edith Wynne, Mme. Lemmens-Sherrington, Mme. Patey, Mr. W. H. Cummings, Mr. E. Lloyd, Mr. Vernon Rigby, Sig. Foll, Herr Henschel, and Mr. Santley. Mr. W. T. Best has been secured as solo organist, Mr. Willing as accompanist, and Sir Michael Costa as conductor. The full rehearsal is announced for Friday, the 22nd inst., at twelve o'clock. The dates of the performances are Monday, the 25th, *Messiah*; Wednesday, the 27th, *Selection*; Friday, the 29th, *Israel in Egypt*; commencing each day at two o'clock. For novelty, therefore, the audience must look to the miscellaneous selection, which will include excerpts from *Athalia*, *Belshazzar*, *Hercules*, *Joshua*, Dryden's "Ode for St. Cecilia's Day," and *Actis and Galatea*, together with four purely instrumental pieces, one of them being a concerto for organ and orchestra.

HERR WAGNER had the honour of being received by Her Majesty and the Royal Family at Windsor Castle on the afternoon of the 17th ult.

M. RUBINSTEIN had the honour of playing, and Herr Henschel the honour of singing, before Her Majesty at Windsor Castle on the 8th ult.

WAGNER's sixty-fifth birthday was celebrated on the 22nd ult., in true German fashion, at a banquet instituted in his honour at the Cannon Street Hotel by the Liederkreis, if we mistake not, the oldest established German musical society in London. Wagner was, of course, present, supported by numerous friends and admirers—Richter, Wilhelmj, Dannreuther, Bache, Cusins, Manns, and many of the leading spirits of the London musical world. On his health being drunk, with musical honours, at the proposition of Herr O. von Ernsthause, president of the society, and on several occasions in the course of the evening, he addressed the company in the ready, pointed, and pithy manner, for which, as an orator, as a poet, and as a musician, he is so renowned.

MR. A. ELLIS, F.R.S., F.S.A., &c., read a paper on the "Measurement and Settlement of Musical Pitch" at a meeting of the Society of Arts, on the 23rd ult.

At the sixth monthly meeting of the Musical Association, a paper "On the Gymnastic Training of the Hand for Performing on Keyed Instruments" was read by Mr. S. S. Stratton, of Birmingham.

THE attention of amateurs of the concertina may be called to a course of ten concerts now in course of being given by Mr. Richard Blagrove, at the Royal Academy of Music. Among other curiosities a quintet, for concertina and strings, composed by Professor G. A. Macfarren, and the "Pilgrim's March," from Mendelssohn's *Italian* symphony, arranged for eight concertinas, may be heard at the seventh concert, announced for Thursday evening, the 7th inst.

THE MONTHLY MUSICAL RECORD, Vol. V., page 113, contains a "supplementary note" by Mr. Woolhouse on "The Violin Bow," in which the prominent success of Mr. James Tubbs, of Wardour Street, in the perfect manufacture of violin bows is made known by the most distinguished testimonials. Some of our readers may not be aware of the important fact that Mr. James Tubbs has since become honoured by a special appointment as Bow Maker to His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh. Mr. Tubbs is now engaged in the execution of an order for a handsome presentation bow, in gold mountings, &c., for the celebrated violinist Wilhelmj, bearing the inscription, "To Wilhelmj, from the Orchestra of the Wagner Festival, London, 1877."

All communications respecting Contributions should be addressed to the Editor, and must be accompanied by the name and address of the writer, as a guarantee of good faith.

The Editor cannot undertake to return Rejected Communications.

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